

## Romulus and Remus

Romulus and Remus are the legendary founders of Rome. According to one story, they were the twin sons of Mars and Rhea, a descendant of Aeneas. When the boys were born, Rhea's father was so outraged that he ordered his daughter buried alive and the twins taken into the woods to be left to die. In one version of the story, the boys were put into a cradle and set adrift on the Tiber River.

The boys were found, however, by a she-wolf (lupia) and raised in the wild, nursed by the wolf and fed by a woodpecker. In another version, they are raised by Lupa, the goddess of wolves. Both the wolf and woodpecker were sacred to Mars. Later the boys were found by a shepherd and taken to his home to be raised by him and his wife.

As grown men they decided to found a new city because they could not live in the one in which they grew up. Romulus wanted to build the city on the Palatine Hill, but Remus wanted to establish it on the Aventine Hill. They settled the disagreement by watching for birds on the two hills. Romulus saw more birds on his hill, so the city was built there.

Remus was outraged by the result and tried to stop the construction. At one point he leaped over the trench that was going to be the foundation of the city wall. This enraged Romulus because it was an omen of bad luck. In his anger Romulus killed his brother.

When the city was completed, Romulus established himself as the first king of Rome and named the city after himself.

- 1) Who was the father of Romulus and Remus? What did the Romans call themselves as a result of this heritage (see "Mars")?
- 2) Romulus and Remus were put into a cradle and set adrift on the Tiber. Who does this sound like?
- 3) Give two versions of who found and raised the boys?
- 4) Where did Romulus want to build the city?
- 5) Where did Remus want to build the city?
- 6) How did the brothers decide where to build the city?
- 7) How did Remus feel about the outcome of where to build the city?
- 8) What did Romulus do to Remus? Why?